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INDONESIA/EAST TIMOR: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WELCOMES MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS INTENT TO ESTABLISH DIALOGUE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Amnesty International today wrote to Ali Alatas, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, welcoming his radio announcement on 30 April that the Indonesian Government wished to establish a dialogue with the organization and to permit human rights organizations to visit East Timor.

The organization said that if the government's stated readiness to permit international organizations to visit East Timor is to be borne out in practice, it should facilitate such a visit by Amnesty International in the near future.

Amnesty International has made numerous efforts over the years to have direct discussions with the Government of Indonesia and to obtain direct access to both Indonesia and East Timor to investigate its serious and long-standing human rights concerns there. Up to now Amnesty International has been disappointed by the Indonesian Government's negative response to these efforts.

In its letter the organization proposed that an Amnesty International delegation should visit Indonesia and East Timor within the next two months in order to conduct human rights research without restriction. During its visit, the organization should also clarify the nature and methods of its work for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide to the Indonesian Government.

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